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### **BAKERSFIELD MAN INDICTED FOR RECEIVING AND POSSESSING IMAGES OF THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN VIA THE INTERNET**

FRESNO – United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury in Fresno returned an indictment against JOE EDWARD DOMINGUEZ, of Bakersfield, California, charging him with one count of receipt of material involving the sexual exploitation of minors and one count of possession of material involving the sexual exploitation of minors.

This case is the product of an investigation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Bakersfield, California. DOMINGUEZ came to the attention of ICE Bakersfield during an investigation initiated by ICE in Springfield, Illinois, which determined that DOMINGUEZ had utilized the Internet to download and upload numerous images of child pornography from a server in Illinois. A search of DOMINGUEZ's residence revealed that he was in possession of a computer and CDs containing numerous pictures and videos which depicted the exploitation of children.

The investigation in this case was undertaken as part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC). PSC is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children, and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to [www.projectsafefchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov) or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Marianne Pansa, who is prosecuting this case, the punishment for receipt of child pornography carries a mandatory 5-year to a maximum 20-year prison term. Possession of child pornography is punishable for up to 10 years in prison. Both offenses provide for a possible lifetime term of supervised release and a fine of up to

\$250,000. The actual sentence will be dictated by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of factors, and will be imposed at the discretion of the court.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.